United Nations A/70/157

General Assembly

Distr.: General
20 July 2015
English
Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Seventieth session
Item 98 (r) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/70/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 69/54, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 2 February 2015, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II. Additional replies will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[11 June 2015]

Argentina has traditionally advocated a comprehensive approach to actions and initiatives in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms regulation. These are areas where Argentina has been actively involved at the regional and global levels in defending the role of multilateralism in general, and of the United Nations in particular, in addressing the multifaceted challenges of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Argentina believes that the best way to promote multilateral disarmament and revitalize existing disarmament bodies while defending national interests is to embark upon substantive negotiations on the various issues on the agenda, within the framework of existing bodies, which are the best place to articulate national security stances.

Argentina has, therefore, actively promoted confidence-building measures, especially in the area of conventional weapons. It is committed to contributing to international peace and security through transparent participation in the international community's collective efforts in the firm belief that greater openness and transparency regarding arms will build confidence, promote stability, help States to moderate their transfer policies, and strengthen peace.

That being so, Argentina has been actively involved in, inter alia, the negotiations over the Arms Trade Treaty, the establishment of the Register of Conventional Arms, and meetings on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, considering that international stability cannot be based solely on national controls and that these instruments contribute to peace and security. Argentina's emphasis on strengthening these mechanisms is part of its broader commitment over recent decades to the development, implementation and strengthening of subregional, regional and global confidence-building measures.

Argentina is also irrevocably committed to non-proliferation and, to date, is the only Latin American country that is a party to the five export control regimes

(Australia Group, Zangger Committee, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement and Missile Technology Control Regime).

In June 2015, Argentina began its second consecutive term as Chair of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group.

Armenia

[Original: English]
[8 May 2015]

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is a growing threat to international peace and security. While international treaties and export control regimes have slowed the spread of such weapons and delivery systems, there is still a risk of their proliferation. The possibility that terrorists may acquire those hazardous materials and their means of delivery adds a new critical dimension to this threat. All those issues deserve due attention, and a global approach is required in order to meet old and new challenges.

As a strong supporter of the effectiveness of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, Armenia actively participates in international forums and discussions. It pays particular attention to the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. At the bilateral level, it cooperates to good effect with partner countries in countering the smuggling of hazardous materials.

At the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Armenia was a sponsor and voted in favour of resolutions aimed at continuing multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, prohibiting the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction, combating nuclear terrorism, preventing an arms race and preventing the first placement of weapons in outer space.

Much attention is paid to the implementation of Security Council resolutions. A governmental inter-agency working group was established for the purpose of implementing the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and developing the 2015-2020 national action plan, which provides a comprehensive update of the policies, laws, regulations and current practices of Armenia. The plan was approved by the Government on 5 February 2015 and then submitted to the 1540 Committee.

Seizures of potentially dangerous materials in recent years in the South Caucasus region have highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation to prevent smuggling activities. The threat posed to regional and global security is best met through joint actions and cooperation. Armenia works actively with partner countries to strengthen capabilities in countering nuclear smuggling in a comprehensive manner. The joint action plan between Armenia and the United States of America on strengthening cooperation to counter nuclear smuggling, signed in July 2008, is well designed to meet those challenges. An intergovernmental working group was established within the framework of the action plan. The two countries regularly share information on current nuclear smuggling threats and trends and discuss best practices in the areas of nuclear detection, nuclear forensics and response to incidents of nuclear smuggling, including law enforcement and criminal liability.

Armenia retains its confidence in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Its three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology — are equally important and valid. Full implementation of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty should remain at the top of our agenda, while joint actions have to be taken to preserve the integrity of the Treaty. The Armenian side hopes that, at the 2015 Review Conference, the Parties will reaffirm their commitment to the Treaty and agree on actions to strengthen its implementation.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[18 March 2015]

The effective resolution of global disarmament and non-proliferation issues requires the concerted efforts of all States. This reaffirms the importance of multilateralism.

A consensus reached through multilateral negotiations that are open to all States for participation on equal terms guarantees or facilitates States' commitment to, and the universality of, the ensuing agreements, measures or instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The need to peacefully resolve existing international disputes also underscores the importance of multilateralism in addressing potential threats in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The existence of nuclear weapons remains the main threat to humanity. For Cuba, the total elimination of nuclear weapons is a priority in the field of disarmament and the only guarantee against their use or the threat of their use.

The stalemate in the negotiations within the multilateral disarmament machinery, which has persisted for several years and which stems from the lack of political will on the part of certain countries, makes it all the more necessary to intensify multilateral efforts.

The multilateral efforts made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries include, notably, the promotion of nuclear disarmament and the proposal, endorsed by a large majority in the General Assembly, to start, as a matter of urgency, negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament on the prompt conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention on the prohibition of the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

The Conference on Disarmament must accordingly agree on a balanced programme of work and, without delay, start negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

Similarly, the Disarmament Commission must agree on the agenda for its forthcoming substantive session and present specific recommendations on disarmament to the General Assembly.

Practice has shown that the goals of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation cannot be achieved through unilateral measures. Multilateralism and political solutions negotiated through the multilateral organs established for

such purposes and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations continue to be the only suitable way to settle disputes.

On the pretext of alleged threats to national security, some States promote and execute unilateral actions, some of which are related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. These unilateral measures pose a threat to international peace and security, undermine multilateralism and multilateral agreements, and erode confidence in the international system and in the very foundations of the United Nations.

In terms of scope and weight, unilateral measures and bilateral and regional agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation are no substitute for agreements reached through multilateral negotiations. Multilateralism must be the core principle of all negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

As a State Member of the United Nations and a State party to many treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism. The multilateral decision-making process conducted through the United Nations, in strict observance of the Charter and the principles of international law, is the only viable mechanism that can prevent the international system from becoming a mechanism for imposing and legitimizing unilateral measures that run counter to the multipolar, just and equitable world order we need.

Seeking negotiated solutions in a multilateral framework and acknowledging the need to arrive at collective agreements are the most effective way to safeguard international peace and security.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[21 April 2015]

With respect to resolution 68/38 of 5 December 2013 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, I respectfully inform you that the Armed Forces of El Salvador are committed to cooperating, promoting and achieving disarmament and non-proliferation to maintain international peace and security.

The Republic of El Salvador does not have any nuclear weapons; however, it recognizes the right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes provided that they take the measures necessary to guarantee the safety of humankind.

Georgia

[Original: English]
[26 May 2015]

Georgia accords special attention to the area of non-proliferation and disarmament. It affirms that nuclear non-proliferation, continued progress on nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are of vital importance and impose responsibilities on all States, and it stresses the fundamental duty of States, consistent with their respective national and international obligations, to maintain effective security of all weapons of mass destruction and related materials

and to prevent non-State actors from acquiring such materials and obtaining information or technology that would enable them to be used for malicious purposes.

Georgia recognizes the importance of multilateral instruments that address disarmament and non-proliferation and urges all States:

- To accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention
- To take urgent action to eliminate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- To support efforts to advance disarmament globally
- To maintain a moratorium on nuclear test explosions, pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and to sign and ratify the Treaty
- To work with all States towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in order to prevent proliferation and advance disarmament

Portugal

[Original: English]
[20 April 2015]

Portugal believes that multilateralism is the most effective way of achieving disarmament and non-proliferation, thereby maintaining international peace and security. Accordingly, Portugal is a party to the most relevant treaties and international and regional mechanisms aimed at preventing and eliminating the threats presented by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Portugal also cooperates with international organizations that work to that end.

Among the relevant treaties and mechanisms, we note the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and the Protocols thereto (including the amendment to Protocol II), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, including the amendment thereto. Portugal is a party to all those instruments.

Portugal also participates in the following export control regimes: the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Portugal has participated in various outreach activities — including formal and informal contacts and initiatives such as seminars, workshops and meetings — aimed at promoting the universalization of the principal treaties and other legal instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation, especially with the Portuguese-speaking countries.

In the wake of the multilateral effort made to conclude a treaty, Portugal was among the first 50 States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, the only legal instrument on disarmament adopted by the United Nations in the past decade.

Insofar as nuclear disarmament is concerned, the threat posed by countries that possess or wish to acquire nuclear weapons, especially in regions that are politically and socially unstable, is generally recognized.

In line with the policies of its European partners, Portugal supports the 5+5 Dialogue. With regard to nuclear disarmament, Portugal looks forward to the full implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, always bearing in mind the importance of confidence-building measures among nuclear and non-nuclear States.

Portugal hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will, as soon as possible, adopt a programme of work that includes the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. To that end, Portugal highlights the importance of implementing the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and pacific uses of nuclear energy. It believes that the effective implementation of that action plan must include ending the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. Portugal has signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and engaged in outreach activities to further its universalization.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[21 April 2015]

Qatar is firmly committed to promoting multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and considers it an important negotiating tool in achieving a range of goals. Qatar is a party to all the relevant conventions, namely, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and is an active participant in the pertinent conferences, seminars and meetings. It is also one of those members of the Non-Aligned Movement that are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Qatar believes that it is very important to make progress towards universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, with the aim of achieving comprehensive and complete disarmament under strict international supervision, thereby according international legitimacy to the relevant negotiations.

Qatar calls for the development of disarmament and non-proliferation strategies and hopes that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty will be successful.

Qatar emphasizes the need to promote the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

Serbia

[Original: English]
[17 April 2015]

The Republic of Serbia is a well-respected manufacturer and exporter of military equipment and conventional weapons. In keeping with the goals and priorities of its foreign policy, it ensures that its national system for the control of international transfers of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods conforms to the rules and standards of the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the obligations deriving from the conventions and treaties to which it is a party, the relevant Security Council resolutions and other international instruments.

The conditions for the export, import, transport and transit of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and the mediation and provision of services in that area are regulated by the Law on the export and import of arms and military equipment (*Official Journal of the Republic of Serbia*, No. 107/2014), Law on the export and import of goods of dual use (*Official Journal of the Republic of Serbia*, No. 95/2013) and relevant by-laws.

In November 2008, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a conclusion on the adoption of principles from the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports — principles that had already been incorporated into a decision on the criteria for the issuance of licences for the export of arms, military equipment and goods of dual use.

The Republic of Serbia has complied consistently with its international obligations in the area of non-proliferation of both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and other international instruments.

Furthermore, following the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, and its ratification by the National Assembly on 29 October 2014, a comprehensive mandatory instrument now establishes common international standards that regulate the transfer of arms and military equipment.

By adopting a relevant conclusion in April 2008, the Government decided that Serbia would accede to international export control regimes. Serbia has become a full-fledged member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, while negotiations are under way for the country to accede to the Wassenaar Arrangement. The accession is expected to facilitate the exchange of information on proliferation risks and improve the system of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[29 May 2015]

The European Security Strategy identifies five major threats: the proliferation of weapons, especially those of mass destruction; terrorism; failed States; regional conflicts; and organized crime.

The National Defence Directive No. 1/2012 states that the current strategic scenario is characterized by the presence of a hybrid threat: conventional conflict combined with the asymmetric confrontation favoured by entities beyond the control of territorially sovereign States.

Cyberattacks, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking in persons, piracy, the expansion of armed and unarmed fanaticized movements and groups, and breakdowns in airspace and aerospace security are already, or are close to becoming, real threats. These emerging realities require multilateral responses, political commitment and consultation if international peace and stability are to be enhanced substantively.

In non-proliferation, a multidisciplinary strategy is needed that encompasses the areas of intergovernmental cooperation, the development of joint follow-up and monitoring instruments, exchanges of information, the establishment of new controls or the updating of existing ones. Their scope involves national defence systems, the strengthening of multilateral instruments and organizations, cooperation in development, and the eradication of illicit trafficking, as well as other aspects.

In order to ensure that a disarmament and non-proliferation system functions effectively, it must be truly multilateral in nature and based on full compliance by States with their obligations. This multilateral approach, in addition to increasing the system's effectiveness, gives it important legitimacy.

Spain is committed to the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament system; it has signed all the international agreements constituting the legal and normative framework of that system, and maintains an active, ambitious and consistent policy in support of its effectiveness and with the clear objective of achieving the universality of the major treaties in this area.

The election of Spain as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, the main body of the Organization which, as entrusted under the Charter of the United Nations, has primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, reflects the international community's recognition of the important role Spain plays in the world and the country's commitment to multilateralism and to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The full text of Spain's submission can be found at www.un.org/disarmament/topics/multilateralism/.

Sudan

[Original: Arabic]
[22 May 2015]

The Sudan stresses that it is important to support international treaties on non-proliferation and the prohibition of nuclear tests in order to ensure that they are universal and verifiable. In order to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects, and hence foster international peace and security, effectiveness is key. It is essential to ensure the cessation of all nuclear-weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons. The Sudan further emphasizes the need for the nuclear-weapon States to provide negative and positive security assurances. It endorses and encourages the bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives adopted by concerned countries to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and calls for continued international cooperation on peaceful use of nuclear energy, and for experts to hold seminars on the legal and technical aspects of the issue.

The Sudan calls for compliance with all instruments to prohibit, curb and dispose of nuclear weapons. It therefore calls on the United Nations and the Secretary-General to fulfil their roles by urging all parties to accede to those instruments in order to achieve universality and promote multilateralism.

The Sudan stresses the importance of prohibiting and preventing proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction, and consolidating international peace and security within the broader framework of multilateral disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation efforts. In that connection, the Sudan highlights the need to promote the universality of the relevant conventions as crucial to achieving their object and purpose. The Sudan welcomes the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Both are multilateral and non-discriminatory, promote confidence among States Parties, contribute to non-proliferation, establish an international mechanism to verify compliance with their provisions, and promote international cooperation and assistance in the peaceful use of the relevant materials.

The Sudan calls on all parties to cooperate on measures to build confidence among the parties in order to bring about the conclusion of effective multilateral instruments related to disarmament and non-proliferation, including reliable mechanisms to verify compliance with their provisions. At the same time, the Sudan notes the importance of the bilateral and regional agreements already concluded between States and regional blocs.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[9 June 2015]

Ukraine has always been committed to the process of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, including its full engagement within United Nations bodies dealing with disarmament, peace and security issues.

Ukraine has always been committed to its non-nuclear status and to the principles of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That approach stands despite the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which led to the annexation of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and is still under way in eastern Ukraine in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions.

Despite being subjected to military aggression on the part of a nuclear-weapon State, the Russian Federation, which denies its violations, in particular under the Budapest Memorandum and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Ukraine abides by its international obligations. It has reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to the principle of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in the joint statement by Ukraine and the United States of America, issued as a result of The Hague Nuclear Security Summit, held in 2014. It has implemented the decisions of nuclear security summits in their entirety, including the decision requiring the removal of all residual stocks of highly enriched uranium.

Ukraine has participated actively in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/53 to make recommendations on possible aspects of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Ukrainian delegations have participated in the work of the First Committee of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament and the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.